

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BANGKO 02336 240406Z  
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 VO-05 CA-01 INSE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 SY-05 SSO-00 /040 W  
-----113863 240414Z /64

O R 240311Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8612  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 2336

HONG KONG FOR INS/DIDIR FELDMAN

FOL TEL SENT ACTION BANGKOK PRIORITY FROM SONGKHLA DATED  
JAN 16, 1978 REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SONGKHLA 0021

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SREF, VM, TH  
SUBJECT: THAI POLICY TOWARDS REFUGEES  
REF: HARPOLD-ANDERSON TELCON JAN 15

1. AS REPORTED IN REFTEL SONGKHLA VICE-GOVERNOR ALLOWED THIRTY  
FOUR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES TO LAND IN SONGKHLA REFUGEE CAMP JAN 15.  
BUT ONLY AFTER MR. MICHAEL HARPOLD, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE INS  
COMMISSIONER, PROMISED THAT THE US WOULD ACCEPT THE 34 INTO THE US  
OR TO ARRANGE FOR A THIRD COUNTRY TO ADMIT THEM.

2. THE 34 REFUGEES--13 MEN, 5 WOMEN AND 16 CHILDREN--SET SAIL FROM  
PHU QUOC ISLAND ON JAN 12 IN VNKG 1145 ADC. THEY ARRIVED IN  
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SONGKHLA DURING THE MORNING OF JAN 15 AT WHICH POINT THE BOAT WAS  
BOARDED AND THE REFUGEES ROBBED OF JEWELRY AND WATCHES. THE BOAT  
WAS TAKEN INTO TOW BY THE RTG NAVY. ITS ENGINE NEEDED REPAIR,  
THERE WAS NO FRESH WATER ON BOARD, FOOD WAS IN SHORT SUPPLY AND  
SEVERAL CHILDREN WERE ILL. THE REFUGEES, WHO INDICATED THAT THEY  
WANTED TO GO TO AUSTRALIA, REQUESTED FROM THE RTG PERMISSION TO  
STAY A WEEK FOR REPAIRS, MEDICAL HELP AND PROVISIONS. THE VICE-

GOVERNOR AGREED TO REPAIR THE ENGINE BUT REFUSED THE OTHER REQUESTS AND ORDERED THE BOAT TOWED OUT TO SEA AFTER THE ENGINE WAS REPAIRED.

3. AT ABOUT 10:30 AM DR. VOGUE OF MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES CONTACTED MR. HARPOLD AND THE AMCONSUL TO INFORM THEM THAT A VN BOAT WAS IN THE CUSTODY OF THE RTG NAVY. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE THAI OFFICIAL AT THE NAVY PIER, WE CONTACTED THE VG BY RADIO (HE WAS IN SABAYOI DISTRICT 60 KILOMETERS FROM SONGKHLA), WHO AGREED TO OUR REQUEST IN RETURN FOR THE GUARANTEE.

4. COMMENT: THIS EPISODE CLEARLY ILLUSTRATES THAT THE BASIC THAI POLICY TOWARD REFUGEES HAS NOT RPT NOT CHANGED. IT STILL REMAINS THE ACCEPTANCE OF BOAT REFUGEES ONLY IN CASES WHERE THE BOAT IS CONSIDERED UNSEAWORTHY. OTHER BOATS ARE TO BE TOWED OUT TO SEA HEADED TOWARD MALAYSIA.

5. THIS INCIDENT HAPPENED THE MORNING AFTER MR. ROBERT OAKLEY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR EAST ASIAN AFFAIRS, MADE A STRONG PLEA TO THE GOVERNOR AND VICE-GOVERNOR OF SONGKHLA TO ACCEPT ALL BOAT REFUGEES. IN RETURN THE US WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO HAVE THE US OR ANOTHER THIRD COUNTRY TAKE THEM OFF THAILAND'S HANDS. THIS REQUEST WAS BASED, NOT ON PROMISES, BUT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS DURING WHICH THE CAMP POPULATION IN SONGKHLA WAS MORE THAN HALVED.

6. THE MONSOON SEASON WILL SHORTLY COME TO AN END. I EXPECT A RISE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THE NUMBER OF BOATS ATTEMPTING TO LAND IN SOUTH THAILAND. UNLESS HIGH RTG OFFICIALS IN BANGKOK AGREE TO ACCEPT ALL BOAT REFUGEES AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, TRANSMIT THIS DECISION TO THE PROVINCES, IT IS HIGHLY PROBABLE THAT BOATS WILL BE TURNED AWAY IN NUMBERS, AS HAPPENED IN NOVEMBER, 1977.

HAYASHIDA

UNQUOTE  
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Concepts:** POLICIES, REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 jan 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Film Number:** D780034-1007  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** THAI POLICY TOWARDS REFUGEES  
**TAGS:** SREF, VM, TH  
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**Type:** TE  
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